2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
OI17 Murngin OI17

and the internal or domestic aspects." In the latter context kinship carries maximum weight; among the Wulamba there is more or less equal balance between these two features. The corporate body as such, among the Wulamba, is based on kinship.

As Fortes has pointed out (1953:31), when lineage structure is discussed it is considered "from a particular analytical angle, with the organization of jural, economic, and ritual activities." It is on this aspect that we require more detailed consideration in relation to the descent group among the Wulamba. This is the case, too, with the structure of authority mentioned by Fortes (p. 32), for a lineage as a corporate group. Each Wulamba descent group has an acknowledged head, an elder to whom all within his group look up. He, in conjunction with elders of other parallel groups forming the linguistic group, has special ritual duties and power: his authority is reinforced by ritual sanctions. It would seem, then, that a more detailed analysis of the significance of the descent group in Arnhem Land religious life would be a rewarding avenue of investigation.

In these last few paragraphs my purpose has been only to consider the corporate unilineal descent group (as found among the Wulamba) in relation to what Fortes has termed the lineage. It (i.e., the unilineal descent group) is for him the basic determinant of lineage structure. If that is so, we can legitimately mention some of his broad generalizations in relation to our concept. Further, we have not deliberately tried to show that the descent group as present in northeastern Arnhem Land social structure is, or may be, equated with a lineage. But there are points of comparison between these two separate, but similar, concepts. These aspects of compatibility we have indicated, and they are propositions for further empirical testing.

NOTES

[1] I have preferred the term used by the people themselves: they are the Wulamba, which refers collectively to all their clans; that is, they may be said to be the Wulamba bloc. The varying dialects are collectively known as Miwoldj. Warner (1937) erroneously used the term "Murngin," which is the name of only one clan and should not be used in this sense.

[2] The material presented here was obtained at Milingimbi in 1930; short periods of work had previously been spent there, in 1946 and 1947. More intensive field work was carried out in 1946–47 within the vicinity of Yirrkalla, northeastern Arnhem Land. The initial period of research was carried out under the Australian National Research Council, the latter under the Research Committee of the University of Sydney; both were under the auspices of the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney. The writer wishes to acknowledge the help and encouragement of Professor A. P. Elkin of that Department. This paper was written under a Nuffield Foundation Dominion Fellowship, in London. It was presented in part and discussed at a seminar on kinship theory at the London School of Economics.

[3] The kinship terms used in this paper are in their Anglicized equivalents: these differ in some cases from those used by Warner and Radcliffe-Brown. For instance, *marikmo* is *marimo; yeppe, jaba; maraitcha, maraidja; marether, maralgur; butara, gudaro; nali, gadi; gawal, galwal; arndi, gandi; galle, galei; dut, duwei; natjiwalker, yadiwalgur; kaminjur, geminjaw;* etc. Terms in capitals denote males.

[4] The approximate population of Arnhem Land is 4,000; 1,500 to 2,000 possibly belonging to the Wulamba bloc.

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
OI17 Murngin OI17

Epilogue

Certainly we may assume that the elements which have been transmitted from one generation to another bear some relation to the cultural emphasis of the people, the emphases during the process being on those which were (consciously or otherwise) felt to be congenial. However, this question obviously raises many issues which cannot be dealt with here.

Finally, what is the future of the cult in the contact situation? The theme of fertility is obviously important in this respect, affecting as it does the continuance of the local Aboriginal group. Elsewhere in Australia, with few exceptions, the Aborigines have declined in numbers under the disrupting influence of the alien culture. In north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Land, the emphasis on reproduction, among both human and animal species, appears to have served, so far, as a potent factor in combating this trend. The Djanggawul cult, therefore, may well be significant in helping to ensure that the Aborigines of this region continue to survive. Perhaps because of its basic associations, it is still a vital force in the society, with (in so far as such comparisons are possible) an even greater emotional hold on the people than other local cults which flourish contemporaneously with it.

This subject, too, needs careful consideration. Nevertheless, if something at least of the faith and the beliefs of the Djanggawul cult can be carried on into the changing society which is developing as a result of alien contact, it may help to ensure the north-central and north-eastern Arnhem Landers' physical survival. Moreover, the blending of such essential features of their traditional life with the new elements which they inevitably absorb from the alien culture will provide them with a situation which is in some degree congenial to them; and the psychological effects of this will have, also, an important bearing on their survival.

The themes which we have noted in this work are not limited in their application to one human group in one specific area. Although phrased in the terms of this particular culture, they have, so to speak, a universal validity. This being so, there is no reason why the Djanggawul cult, adapted perhaps to meet the demands of the present crisis in Aboriginal life, should not endure as a living faith, to play its part in ensuring the continuity of the Aboriginal group, as a people adjusted to meet, in their own way, the changing world which confronts them.

8: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1954
O117 Murngin O117

121 gimbi in the north, and the Liverpool River country behind Oenpelli in the west and south-west, seems to be virtually uninhabited.

161 Although Arnhem Land covers a large area, its population has been assessed at only about four thousand. This includes Aborigines on Mission stations, where tentative census figures are available, while in regions away from direct supervision only approximate estimates have been made. There are only three large un-contacted areas in the whole of Arnhem Land: about the Liverpool and King rivers, and the mainland south of Milingimbi; the neighbourhood of Rose River; and the hills in the south-western corner of Arnhem Land. However, it is only in the first two places that Aborigines are to be found in any numbers, and both together probably contain no more than about a thousand people. These Liverpool groups have been gradually [166] displaced, within recent years, by the westward pressure of people from Cape Stewart and the south of Milingimbi, and many of them forced to fluctuate between Goulburn Islands, Oenpelli and the Buffalo camps. They would number today no more than approximately four hundred.

. . . . .

114 This area, from Rose River in the south to Goulburn Island and Oenpelli in the west, has been mentioned in early literature, particularly by such travellers as Sir Mathew Flinders and Phillip King;[3] and in recent years various authors such as Ion Idriess,[4] Charles Barrett,[5] W. E. Harney,[6] Alan Marshall,[7] Carl Warburton,[8] Ernestine Hill,[9] Colin Simpson[10] and Clyde Fenton[11] have tended to over-glamorise Arnhem Land and its people.

The most important and detailed information concerning the historical and geographical background of Arnhem Land is not generally accessible,[12] although Alfred Searcy[13] provides some valuable notes and reminiscences. But despite some interesting references to the contact of Europeans with natives, these books and notes concern themselves very little with the local people and their lives.

Missionaries too have helped to add to the existing documentary evidence.[14] Professor Lloyd Warner[15] carried out social

8: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1954
OI17 Murngin OI17

rare in this north-east region[27] seems hard to believe when we consider the extent of Asiatic, Indonesian and European contact, and the sexual intimacy of the Aboriginal women with members of all these groups. Physically, these people remain more or less intact,[28] and increasing sterility has not followed contact as it has at Goulburn Island in western Arnhem Land. But there is a danger today, with the growing association these natives have with the Goulburn Island people, with the "crew-boys" on Mission luggers, and with native and European men and women in Darwin, that venereal disease will be introduced and disseminated. Aboriginal attitudes toward medical attention often preclude an early treatment of such cases, and the disease is allowed to gain much ground before it can be controlled and eradicated.

A word may be said of depopulation in this region. The reasons for this are not the same as at Goulburn Island, or on the cattle stations in the central north-western area of the Northern Territory,[29] but may perhaps be found in the warlike habits of the eastern Arnhem Landers.[30] Constant feuding over a long period is said to have reduced especially the male population, and brought about the extinction or amalgamation of many clans. This warring propensity led to a surplus of women, and had a direct bearing on sexual behaviour. For example, large polygynous families were formed; and these are conventional even today. It was perhaps because of this that the Aborigines were more ready to allow the Macassans and Malays access to their womenfolk: possibly there would have been far more dissension between these people and the Indonesian traders had their social structure been primarily monogamous.

[pp. 26-176 not processed]

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

greatest of the Reserves and is in the north of the Northern Territory. Its northern shores are washed by the Arafura Sea; on the east it is bounded by the Gulf of Carpentaria; and to the south lies the barrier of high, impenetrable, barren sand-stone mountains and deep gorges. Approximately thirty-four thousand square miles of this desolate country, with its aboriginal population of three thousand, was declared an Aboriginal Reserve in 1931.

The writing of this book has entailed the collecting of notes, incidents, myths, and nomads' quaint sayings, which I have jotted down on scraps of paper or on the fly-leaves of books I have had with me in the bush, in aboriginal canoes, or on luggers. In the spelling of aboriginal names and phrases I have not used any system of phonetics, but have attempted to give ordinary English letter values. 'Yulengor' is a general race-term applied by Stone Age men of east Arnhem Land to all nomads, in the way that we refer to them as aborigines. 'Yulengor' is not used elsewhere.

I gratefully acknowledge help given by Professor A. P. Elkin who prepared the illuminating introduction. But for my wife the notes would have been offered to the public years ago, and she has my thanks for the wisdom of such restraint, and for encouragement and constructive criticism as I have attempted to convey to the printed page the fascinating customs, unforgettable experiences, and mind-teasing Yulengor sayings of Arnhem Land.

W. S. C.

Brisbane, 1956

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

nonchalantly remarked that when bush-rats spoiled most of the stores, they bartered fish, wallaby, and lily-seeds from nomads.

We saw white-washed aboriginal cottages built from locally burnt shell-lime, stones and ant-bed that had been standing for twenty years. Weird outlines of hands were in a number of bark huts, and an old nomad explained that when they 'go bush' they leave the mark of a hand in the house of a friend. Imprints are made by chewing moistened clay and spraying it from the mouth over a hand outstretched on the bark. When the hand is removed its outline remains in the centre of the white clay.

Indifferent land had been cultivated, and in good seasons yielded tapioca, sweet-potatoes, coconuts, and bananas. Nomads work in the gardens during the wet season and also collect bêche-de-mer from the mud-flats for export. Women weave baskets, fans, and trays from wild pandanus palm, and these are marketed for them by the mission.

At Goulburn Island I met some of the young Fijians who work on all these stations. Kolinio was a giant, a carpenter by trade and the son of a chief. He introduced me to the satisfying juice of the green coconut by gashing a lip in the soft shell of a green nut and handing it to me brimming with cold, exquisitely flavoured liquid. It has been inadequately likened to cold lemonade. Fijians get on well with aborigines and perhaps their colour is a link rather than a bar. They are born agriculturists, but need to unlearn a lot when they come from their fertile islands to desolate monsoonal Arnhem Land.

Milingimbi was at that time the end of the lugger trip. It is one of the many low scrub-covered islands and mud-flats known as the Crocodile Islands, yet within thirty miles of Milingimbi there is the densest Yulengor population in Arnhem Land. In 1918 this mission was begun as an extension of that at Goulburn Island. The advance seems

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

record the event. At high tide this rock is covered by sea water, and to this day it pours out a stream of fresh crystal-clear water.

A geologist might explain this Junkgowa miracle, by observing that the spring-water holds iron in solution, and that as it bubbles up, the surrounding sand is cemented and built into a crater. A similar structure in Arnhem Bay was put to use by Macassar traders, who wedged a hollow tree trunk into the neck of the spring. The fresh spring-water rose inside the tree, ran out along the hollow limb and into the fishermen's buckets brought alongside in their canoes. Though the salt water rose over the spring, the fresh water continued to flow from this improvised fountain.

Once the Elcho Island totems had been established, the Junkgowa parted company. The Men remained to guard the site, but the female Junkgowa had many totems and unborn children to distribute, so they crossed to the mainland. They followed the shores of Castlereagh Bay, placing the totems, establishing new hordes, creating peculiar rock formations, and making food areas. By the sea they made shallow marine plains, and on them planted sea-grass, and in these salt-water pastures they left turtle and dugong. Near the head of the bay the Women produced children in greater numbers, saying: 'We must go slowly up and down, leaving hordes and totems here, or we shall never get rid of them.' This accounts for the large number of hordes around Castlereagh Bay, which has the densest population in Arnhem Land. On a wide plain they planted clumps of jungle and allocated a separate jungle to each horde for its totem centre, and in each jungle a pair of children were born and told to inaugurate a horde.

By the low-lying shores of Castlereagh Bay the Women found salt-water plains, where they opened their dilly-bags to distribute totems, but found that they had already given away all those decorated with red feathers. Those remaining